

Alma High School

Student Handbook 2021-2022



1500 North Pine Avenue, Alma, MI 48801
www.almaschools.net

Office Hours:	School Year	7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
	Summer: Monday - Thursday	7:00 a.m. - 4:15 p.m.
	Friday	7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Phone Numbers:	District Main Number	989-463-3111
	Principal	989-466-7501
	Assistant Principal	989-466-7502
	Student Services Office	989-466-7503
	District Athletic Director	989-466-7506
	Guidance Office	989-466-7502
	Career Technical Education Office	989-466-7549
	Instructional Materials Center	989-466-7532
Before and After School Attendance Line	989-466-7522	

Fight Song

Cheer, cheer for old Alma High
Wake up the echoes cheering her name
While her classes cheer on high,
Shake down the thunder from the sky.
What though the odds be great or small,
Old Alma High will win over all.
While her loyal sons are marching
Onward to victory, fight!

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FOREWORD

This student handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain board policies and procedures. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your teachers or the principal.

This handbook summarizes many of the official policies and administrative guidelines of the board of education and the district. To the extent that the handbook is ambiguous or conflicts with these policies and guidelines, the policies and guidelines shall supersede. This handbook is effective immediately and supersedes any prior handbook and other written material on the same subjects.

This handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the board's policies and the school's rules as of June 2017. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after June 30, 2017, the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevail.

DAILY SCHEDULE

	<u>A LUNCH</u>		<u>B LUNCH</u>
1 st Period	8:10 – 9:20	1 st Period	8:10 – 9:20
2 nd Period	9:30 – 10:40	2 nd Period	9:30 – 10:40
3 rd Period/Lunch	Class 11:10 - 12:30 Lunch 10:40 – 11:10	3 rd Period/Lunch	Class 10:50 – 12:00 Lunch 12:00– 12:30
4 th Period	12:40 – 1:50	4 th Period	12:40 – 1:50
5 th Period	2:00 – 3:10	5 th Period	2:00 – 3:10

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of the Alma Public School District to provide an equal education opportunity for all students. Any person who believes that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin, while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the district's Compliance Office: Stacey Criner, Superintendent, at 989-466-7511.

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedures as described in Board Policy 2260. Any student making a complaint or participating in a school investigation will be protected from any threat or retaliation. The compliance officer can provide additional information concerning equal access to educational opportunity.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The board of education recognizes and values parents and families as children's first teachers and decision-makers in education. The board believes that student learning is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents and family. Such a partnership between the home and school and greater involvement of parents in the education of their children generally result in higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and reduced absenteeism.

The term "families" is used in order to include children's primary caregivers, who are not their biological parents, such as foster caregivers, grandparents, and other family members.

Through this policy, the board directs the establishment of a parental involvement plan by which a school-partnership can be established and provided to the parent of each child in the district. The plan must encompass parent participation through meetings and other forms of communication. The parental involvement plan shall reflect the board's commitment to the following:

Relationships with Families

- Cultivating school environments that are welcoming, supportive, and student-centered
- Providing professional development for staff that helps build partnerships between families and schools
- Providing family activities that relate to various cultures, languages, practices, and customs, and bridge economic and cultural barriers
- Providing coordination, technical support, and other support to assist schools in planning and implementing family involvement activities

Effective Communication

- Providing information to families to support the proper health, safety, and well-being of their children
- Providing information to families about school policies, procedures, programs, and activities
- Promoting regular and open communication between staff and students' family members
- Communicating with families in a format and language that is understandable, to the extent practicable
- Providing information and involving families in monitoring student progress
- Providing families with timely and meaningful information regarding Michigan's academic standards, State and local assessments, and pertinent legal provisions
- Preparing families to be involved in meaningful discussions and meetings with staff

Volunteer Opportunities

- Providing volunteer opportunities for families to support their children's school activities
- Supporting other needs, such as transportation and child care, to enable families to participate in school sponsored family involvement events

Learning at Home

- Offering training and resources to help families learn strategies and skills to support at-home learning and success in school
- Working with families to establish learning goals and help their children accomplish these goals
- Helping families to provide a school and home environment that encourages learning and extends learning at home

Involving Families in Decision Making and Advocacy

- Involving families as partners in the process of school review and continuous improvement planning
- Involving families in the development of its district-wide parent involvement plan and distributing it to families

Collaborating with the Community

- Building constructive partnerships and connecting families with community-based programs and other community resources
- Coordinating and integrating family involvement programs and activities with district initiatives and community-based programs that encourage and support families' participation in their children's education, growth, and development

SECTION I – GENERAL INFORMATION

ENROLLMENT

In general, State law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian resides, unless enrolling under the district's open enrollment policy.

New students under the age of eighteen (18) must be enrolled by their parent or legal guardian. When enrolling, parents must provide copies of the following:

- a birth certificate or similar document
- court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate)
- proof of residency
- proof of immunizations

Under certain circumstances, temporary enrollment may be permitted. In such cases, parents will be notified about documentation required to establish permanent enrollment.

Students enrolling from another school must have an official transcript from their previous school in order to have credit transferred. The Guidance Office will assist in obtaining the transcript, if not presented at the time of enrollment.

Homeless students who meet the federal definition of homeless may enroll and will be under the direction of the District Liaison for Homeless Children with regard to enrollment procedures.

New students eighteen (18) years of age or older are not required to be accompanied by a parent when enrolling. When residing with a parent, these students are encouraged to include the parents in the enrollment process. When conducting themselves in school, adult students have the responsibilities of both student and parent.

A student who has been suspended or expelled by another public school in Michigan may be temporarily denied admission to the district's schools during the period of suspension or expulsion even if that student would otherwise be entitled to attend school in the district. Likewise, a student who has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public school in another state and the period of expulsion or removal has not expired, may be temporarily denied admission to the district's schools during the period of expulsion or removal, or until the expiration of the period of expulsion or removal which the student would have received in the district had the student committed the offense while enrolled in the district. Prior to denying admission, however, the superintendent shall offer the student opportunity for a hearing to review the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion and any other factors the superintendent determines to be relevant.

SCHEDULING

Schedules are provided to each student at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment. Schedules are based on the student's needs and available class space. Any changes in a student's schedule should be handled through the Guidance Office. Students may be denied course enrollment due to a lack of available space or the need to pass prerequisites. Students are expected to follow their schedules. Any variation should be approved with a schedule change.

Foreign students and foreign-exchange students (from recognized and approved student programs) are eligible for admission on the same basis as other non-resident students.

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Alma Public Schools shall arrange for individual instruction to students of legal school age who

are not able to attend classes because of a physical or emotional disability.

Parents should contact the school administration regarding procedures for such instruction. Applications must be approved by the Guidance Office and the principal. Alma Public Schools will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) days.

Applications for individual instruction shall be made by a physician licensed to practice in the state of Michigan, a parent, student, or other caregiver. A physician must certify the nature and existence of a medical condition, state the probable duration of the confinement, request such instruction, and present evidence of the student's ability to participate in an educational program.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Students are expected to be in school all day. If a student must leave school for a legitimate reason, they should present, in writing, a note from a parent to the Student Services Office on the morning of the absence. The SSO staff will issue a pass for the student to notify teachers of dismissal. Students must report to the SSO to officially sign out before leaving school. No student is to leave without first following the checkout procedures. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence. Students returning to school on the same day must sign in at the office before reporting to class.

TRANSFER OUT OF THE DISTRICT

If a student plans to transfer from Alma Public Schools, the parent must notify the principal. Transfer will be authorized only after the student has completed the arrangements, returned all school materials, and paid any fees or fines. School records may not be released if the transfer is not properly completed. Parents are encouraged to contact the Guidance Office for details.

WITHDRAWAL

No student under the age of eighteen (18) will be allowed to withdraw from school without the written consent of his/her parents.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Students must be current with all immunizations required by law or have an authorized waiver from State immunization requirements. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waivers, the principal may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with State law. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the Guidance Office.

INJURY AND ILLNESS

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the office. If minor, the student will be treated and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the office will follow emergency procedures. A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission to go to the Student Services Office. The appropriate staff will determine whether or not the student should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission.

PRESCRIPTION AND NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

Prescription and non-prescription medication must be kept in the Guidance Office. Prescription medication must be delivered in a prescription bottle by a parent, and a permission form must be completed for medication distribution by the Guidance Office staff.

CONTROL OF CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND PESTS

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The school's professional staff has the authority

to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or highly-transient pest, such as lice.

Specific diseases include: diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, and other conditions indicated by the local and state health departments.

CONTROL OF NONCASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

In the case of noncasual-contact communicable-diseases, the school still has the obligation to protect the safety of the staff and students. In these cases, the person in question will have his/her status reviewed by a panel of resource people, including the County Health Department, to ensure that the rights of the person affected and those in contact with that persons are respected. The school will seek to keep students and staff in school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion.

Noncasual-contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC-AID Related Complex (condition), HIV (Human-immunodeficiency), HAV, HBV, HCB (Hepatitis A, B, C), and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.

As required by Federal law, parents will be requested to have their child's blood checked for HIV, HBV, and other blood-borne pathogens when the child has bled at school and students or staff members have been exposed to the blood. Any testing is subject to laws protecting confidentiality.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The American's with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the district's program and facilities.

STUDENT RECORDS

Alma Public Schools maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information.

Neither the board nor its employees shall permit the release of the social security number of a student or other individual except as authorized by law (see AB 8350). When documents containing social security numbers are no longer needed, they shall be shredded by staff with authorized access to such records.

Each year the superintendent shall provide public notice to students and their parents of its intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as "directory information." The board designates the below as student directory information:

- name
- address
- telephone number
- date and place of birth
- major field of study
- participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- height and weight, if a member of an athletic team
- dates of attendance
- date of graduation
- awards received
- honor rolls

- scholarships
- telephone numbers for inclusion in school or PTO directories
- photographs or videos of students participating in school activities, events, or programs.

Directory information can be provided upon request to any individual, other than a for-profit organization, even without the written consent of a parent. Parents may refuse to allow the board to disclose any or all of such directory information upon written notification. For further information about the items included within the category of directory information and instructions on how to prohibit its release, consult the board's annual Family Education and Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) notice which can be found in section 8330 of Alma Board Policy.

Other than directory information, access to all other student records is protected by FERPA and Michigan law. Except in limited circumstances as specifically defined in State and Federal law, the school district is prohibited from releasing confidential education records to any outside individual or organization without the prior written consent of the parents, or the adult student, as well as those individuals who have matriculated and entered a postsecondary educational institution at any age. Confidential records include test scores, psychological reports, behavioral data, disciplinary records, and communications with family and outside service providers.

Students and parents have the right to review and receive copies of all educational records. Costs for copies of records may be charged. To review student records, please provide a written notice identifying requested student records to the Guidance Office. You will be given an appointment with the appropriate person to answer any questions and to review the requested student records.

Parents and adult students have the right to amend a student record when they believe that any of the information contained in the record is inaccurate, misleading or violates the student's privacy. A parent or adult student must request the amendment of a student record in writing and if the request is denied, the parent or adult student will be informed of their right to a hearing on the matter.

Individuals have a right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education if they believe that the district has violated FERPA.

Consistent with the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), no student shall be required, as a part of the school program or the district's curriculum, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult or an emancipated minor) or his/her parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

- political affiliations or beliefs of the student or his/her parents
- mental or psychological problems of the student or his/her family
- sexual behavior or attitudes
- illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
- critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships
- legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers
- religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents
- income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program)

Consistent with the PPRA and board policy, the superintendent shall ensure that procedures are established whereby parents may inspect any materials used in conjunction with any such survey, analysis, or evaluation. Further, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or

evaluation created by a third party before it is administered or distributed by the school. The parent will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the principal.

The superintendent will provide notice directly to parents of students enrolled in the district of the substantive content of this policy at least annually at the beginning of the school year, and within a reasonable period of time after any substantive change in this policy. In addition, the superintendent is directed to notify parents of students in the district, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when the following activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled:

- activities involving the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information for otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose
- the administration of any survey by a third party that contains one or more of the items described above.

The Family Policy Compliance Office in the U.S. Department of Education administers both FERPA and PPRA. Parents and/or eligible students who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605
www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpc

Informal inquiries may be sent to the Family Policy Compliance Office via the following email addresses: ferpa@ed.gov. and ppra@ed.gov.

REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES

Parents have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school. They also may observe instruction in any class, particularly those dealing with instruction in health and sex education. Any parent who wishes to review materials or observe instruction must contact the principal prior to coming to the school. Parents' rights to review teaching materials and instructional activities are subject to reasonable restrictions and limits.

CLOSED CAMPUS

Alma High School operates with a closed campus for all students. Students are not to leave school grounds during the school day without checking out of the Student Services Office with parental approval. During lunch periods, students are to be in the cafeteria, adjacent hallways or the courtyard. Parking lots are off limits. We strongly discourage parents from signing students out during their lunch period. Parents wanting to sign their student out for lunch must do so in writing the morning of the removal.

CALLS AND MESSAGES

Calls for emergencies will be forwarded to students immediately. Other messages will be available in the office and students will be paged over the public address system during passing time. Parents are asked to limit messages to only those of the utmost importance.

PACKAGE AND FOOD DELIVERY

There will be no food/package deliveries to the office. This is to limit the number of people in and out of our building.

LOCKERS

Each student will be assigned an individual locker for his/her use for each school year. For safety

and security reasons, backpacks and bags will not be allowed in the classrooms; all bags must be stored in lockers. Any oversized athletic equipment and bags may be stored in the entryway to SRC. No bags will be stored in the Student Services Office.

Students are responsible for the care of their lockers and must bear the cost of any damage which they inflict. Damage to lockers by others should be reported immediately to the Student Services Office. For sanitation and health reasons, students should not leave food in lockers. All lockers must be completely cleaned out at the end of the school year for cleaning and repairs. The school is not responsible for items left in lockers at the end of the year.

Lockers are the property of the school and only assigned for student use. They should be kept locked when not in use. Lockers are **not** to be shared with other students. The school reserves the right to enter any locker for purposes deemed essential. Lockers are searched periodically by canines for banned substances.

VALUABLES

Students are encouraged not to bring items of value to school. Items such as jewelry, expensive clothing, electronics, and the like, are tempting targets for theft and extortion. All items should be locked in the student's assigned locker or gym locker. The school cannot be responsible for their safe-keeping and will not be liable for loss or damage to personal valuables.

FIRE, LOCKDOWN, AND TORNADO DRILLS

The school complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with State law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building.

Tornado drills will be conducted seasonally using the timeliness procedures provided by the state.

Lockdown drills in which the students are restricted to the interior of the school building with the building secured will occur a minimum of three (3) times each school year.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

If the school must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, Alma Public Schools will place this information on the district website and will notify the following radio and television stations: ABC 12, WNEM TV 5 and the local radio stations WQBX 104.9 and WFYC 1280 AM.

Parents and students are responsible for knowing about emergency closings and delays. Alma Public Schools uses Power Announcement for school closing and delay announcements. The system will attempt to call the phone number that is on record at each child's school. Parents are able to access and update this information by going to the website (on Alma Public School's website, click on PowerSchool Parent Portal Directions icon).

PREPAREDNESS FOR TOXIC AND ASBESTOS HAZARDS

The school is concerned for the safety of students and attempts to comply with all Federal and State laws and regulations to protect students from hazards that may result from industrial accidents beyond the control of school officials or from the presence of asbestos materials used in previous construction. A copy of the school district's Preparedness for Toxic Hazard and Asbestos Hazard Policy and asbestos management plan will be made available for inspection at the board offices upon request.

VISITORS

Visitors, particularly parents, are welcome at the school. In order to properly monitor the safety of

students and staff, each visitor must report to the SSO upon entering the school to obtain a pass. Any visitor found in the building without a pass shall be reported to the principal. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, he/she should call for an appointment prior to coming to the school, in order to schedule a mutually convenient time.

Students may not bring visitors to school without prior written permission from the principal.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS CENTER

The IMC is open from 7:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Books are due two (2) weeks from the date the date of check out, and they may be renewed prior to the date due. A \$.05 per day fine is charged for overdue books. Reference materials may be checked out at the end of the school day and must be returned by 7:45 a.m. the following day.

Computer and technology equipment is available for educational purposes. Use of the equipment will be supervised by the media director. Appropriate behavior, including quiet conversation, is expected.

Beverages in containers with screw-caps are allowed at IMC tables. No beverages are allowed in the computer lab or at the computers in the main room. No other food or beverages are permitted.

SECTION II - ACADEMICS

COURSE OFFERINGS

For the high school course offerings, please refer to the curriculum guide.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also other trips that are part of the school's co-curricular and extra-curricular program. No student may participate in any school sponsored trip without parental consent. Alma High School attendance rules and student conduct expectations apply to all field trips.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS - MICHIGAN MERIT CURRICULUM

Beginning with the Class of 2020, a minimum of 27 credits* are required for graduation from Alma High School. These credits must include:

English..... 4 credits
English 9, 10, 11, 12 Literature and Composition (or the honors equivalents)

Mathematics..... 4 credits
Students must complete the math curriculum through Algebra II. One credit must be completed during the senior year. Additional classes that count as a senior year math credit include: Advanced Math, Chemistry II, Physics, Auto Technology, Accounting, Health Occupations, Welding, Drafting, Electronics and Computer Repair, and Construction Trades.

Science..... 3 credits
Earth Science, Biology, and Chemistry or Physics

Social Studies..... 3 credits
World History, American History, Economics, and American Government

Health.....	1/2 credit Required during the freshman year
Physical Education.....	1/2 credit Required during the freshman year
Visual, Performing, or Applied Art	1 credit Classes that count for this credit include: all art and music classes, Forensics and Drama, Humanities, Speech, Welding, and Yearbook. This requirement may be substituted with additional English, math, science, or world language classes, or the completion of a CTE program.
World Language	2 credits One credit may be substituted with an additional credit from the Visual, Performing, or Applied Arts curriculum.
Electives	9 credits Credits from a variety of curriculum areas are available to meet the graduation requirements. These electives should be concentrated in specific areas that will enhance each student's future educational and/or occupational plans.

All students must enroll for 7.5 credits per year. Students must check to see if they meet all requisites for the courses they wish to enroll. Listed pre-requisites must be completed prior to taking a course. Co-requisites may be completed prior to or at the same time as a course. Students should first register for any required classes that must be repeated due to prior failure.

*Phased Graduation Requirements: Class of 2018 - 29 credits; Class of 2019 - 28 credits

ACADEMIC HONORS

After completion of their seventh semester of high school, overall GPA's will be reviewed and the following honors will be recognized at Honors Night and Commencement.

- Cum Laude - Students with a GPA of 3.5-3.79
- Magna Cum Laude - Students with a GPA of 3.8-3.99
- Summa Cum Laude - Students with an overall GPA of 4.0

The titles of valedictorian and salutatorian will be designated to the students who are graduating Summa Cum Laude with the highest (valedictorian) and second highest (salutatorian) overall score on the designated state proficiency examination(s). To be considered for the honor of valedictorian and salutatorian, a student must graduate with the class he/she enters high school with and must have taken the state assessment as a student at Alma High School.

PROMOTION, PLACEMENT, AND RETENTION

A student's progress toward graduation and receiving a diploma is determined by completing required coursework, earning the necessary credits, and passing the State mandated tests. A student is only promoted when the necessary requirements are met or the student has completed the goals and objectives of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or personal curriculum. It is the student's responsibility to keep in contact with his/her counselor and teachers to ensure that all requirements are being met. Information about credit and course requirements is available in the Guidance Office, and a counselor will answer any questions.

ONLINE LEARNING

E2020 will primarily be utilized for students who are in need of credit recovery due to the failure of a course and/or other extenuating circumstances. In most instances, E2020 courses will be offered in addition to a student's normal class load. Students will be expected to:

- remain self-motivated to complete course work independently.
- meet all E2020 course expectations by the end of the semester in which the course is assigned.
- meet with their assigned online mentor on a bi-weekly basis to review progress in the course.
- make weekly progress toward the completion of the course.

Students successfully completing E2020 courses will receive credit for the course. Students failing to complete their E2020 course in the assigned time will be dropped from the course.

Michigan Virtual University

Michigan Virtual University (MVU) provides additional course options for students. Courses taken to complete a MMC requirement will receive a grade. Elective courses may be taken on a credit/no credit basis by student request at the start of the course. Students may drop an MVU course during the designated drop period without any penalty and will be assigned another course. Students must be in good academic standing and on pace to graduate on time in order to take an MVU course. Students will be expected to:

- remain self-motivation to complete course work independently.
- meet all MVU course expectations by the end of the semester in which the course is assigned.
- meet with their online mentor on a bi-weekly basis to review progress in the course.
- make weekly progress toward the completion of the course.

Students completing MVU course work on campus are required to report to the online learning lab located in the IMC. Students choosing to complete MVU courses off campus are expected to sign in and out in the SSO and remain off campus for the duration of the assigned period.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE AND PLACEMENT TESTS

The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test, (PSAT) is the qualifying test for the National Merit Scholarship Program giving the student verbal and math scores which can be used to predict SAT scores. All freshmen and sophomores are required to take the PSAT in the spring.

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and achievement test programs are required by some Michigan colleges and many out-of-state colleges. The SAT is now incorporated into the MME. All juniors are required to take the SAT in the spring.

The American College Test WorkKeys is a job skills assessment system measuring "real-world" skills that employers believe are critical to job success. All juniors will take the WorkKeys in the spring.

The M-STEP provides information about student performance in science and social studies. All juniors will take the M-STEP test in the spring.

COMPETENCY TESTING

Any high school student who wishes to test out of a course in which he/she is not enrolled may do so by taking the competency examination for the course and receiving a score of at least a 78% or by demonstrating mastery of the subject matter as determined by the assessment. Successful completion of a competency examination will be recorded on the student's official transcript, but it

will not count toward the total number of required credits for graduation, nor will it be used to compute grade point average. It will, however, fulfill the graduation requirement for any required class. The student may not receive credit for a course in the same area but lower in the course sequence. Any student who attempts to test out of a given class and fails, will not be afforded the opportunity to attempt to test out of the same class again. If a senior wishes to take the competency test of a class required for graduation, he/she must complete the test before winter break in December.

EXAM EXEMPTION

Students in grades 9-12 will be allowed to exempt one (1) exam per trimester of their choice if they meet the following criteria: ****Attendance requirements are suspended 20/21 school year.**

- Student needs to have a “B” average in the class
- Student must have 3 or less absences for **ALL** classes
- Student must have 3 or less tardies for **ALL** classes
- Student cannot have any unexcused absences for **ALL** classes

*The attendance criteria is for all classes combined. If you have 4 or more absences or an unexcused absence in one class then you lose the privilege of being able to exempt an exam in a class that you may have qualified to exempt.

*Seniors – if you meet the above criteria during the third trimester, you can exempt all of your exams.

COMPUTERS, TECHNOLOGY, AND NETWORKS

Students are authorized to use the school's computers, laptops, tablets, personal communication devices (as defined by Policy 5136), network, Internet connection, and online services for educational purposes. Use of the education technology is a privilege, not a right. Students must conduct themselves in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. Unauthorized or inappropriate use technology, including any violation of these guidelines, may result in cancellation of the privilege, disciplinary action consistent with this handbook, and/or civil or criminal liability. Prior to accessing the educational technology, students and parents of minor students must sign the Student Education Technology Acceptable Use and Safety Agreement. Parents are encouraged to discuss their values with their children and encourage students to make decisions regarding their use of the technology that is in accord with their personal and family values, in addition to the board's standards.

SECTION III - ACTIVITIES

SCHOOL SPONSORED CLUBS

Students are encouraged to participate in co-curricular activities. Clubs and organizations give students an opportunity to improve leadership qualities, learn new skills, and have fun. Listed below are the clubs, organizations, and activities available to students at Alma High School:

Student Council/Government
Student United Way
Model UN
FFA
Jazz Band
Business Professionals of America
Robotics

National Honor Society
National Vocational Honor Society
Quiz Bowl
Forensics
Marching Band
Math Team

ATHLETICS

Alma High School is a member of the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) and the Tri-Valley Conference. Alma High School offers twenty-two (22) sports for our students.

Fall

Boys Soccer
Boys Tennis
Sideline Cheerleading
Cross Country
Football
Girls Golf
Girls Swimming
Volleyball

Winter

Boys Basketball
Girls Basketball
Boys Bowling
Boys Swimming
Competitive Cheerleading
Pom Poms
Wrestling

Spring

Baseball
Boys Golf
Girls Soccer
Girls Tennis
Softball
Track

MIXERS

Students must present, upon request, required identification to be admitted. Only Alma High School students are allowed to attend mixers. Mixer doors will close 45 minutes after the conclusion of the game, and end at 11 p.m. Once students leave the building, they will not be readmitted. Attendance can be denied at the discretion of the administration.

Students suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be allowed to enter and parental contact will be made.

The school dress code applies to mixers.

SPECIAL DANCES

All mixers rules apply to special dances, except for the conclusion time. All tickets must be purchased in advance. No one may enter the dance without prior ticket purchase. A guest form for any non-current Alma High School student is required. Forms will be filled out, returned, and after administration approval, tickets may be purchased.

WORK PERMITS

Work permits may be obtained from the SSO. However, before the work permit can be issued, an application must be obtained and completed. The prospective employer must fill out the application for the work permit. Once the employer has filled out this form, the student must bring it to the SSO. The work permit should then be kept on file at the employer's place of business.

Birth certificates are required of those students requesting a work permit that are not from the Alma School District.

Students issued work permits must be aware that poor school attendance may affect the continuance of a work permit.

SECTION IV - CONDUCT

EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to routinely:

- respect the worth and dignity of each individual and the rights of fellow students.
- respect the rights and responsibilities of all staff members as they perform their duties.
- observe a code of conduct of all citizens by the use of proper language, etiquette, and appearance.
- understand and adhere to all school policies and be willing to accept the responsibilities

that go along with their rights and privileges.

- attend school on a regular basis and be prompt in arriving at school and their assigned classes.
- devote all their energies toward realizing their potential and working to the best of their ability.
- involve themselves in the total school program and avail themselves of all the school has to offer.
- exhibit a sense of pride toward their school and exercise proper use and care of its facilities.

ATTENDANCE

It is imperative that students be in attendance each school day so they do not miss a significant portion of their education. Important learning results from active participation in the classroom and other school activities which cannot be replaced by individual study. Attendance is also important in the development of a high quality work ethic, which will be significant factor in a student's success with future employers. The school wants to help students develop the habit of dependability in showing up every day and being on time.

The State of Michigan law requires students to attend school until their eighteenth birthday and for students to not miss excessive days. Violation of this law is brought to the attention of the truancy officer and the Gratiot County Court System.

Policy

It is expected that students attend all scheduled classes. Parents must notify the high school on the day their student is absent. If a student is going to be absent for an extended period, the parent may call with those dates in advance. Absences past a week old will not be excused unless there is an extreme circumstance. The attendance office will try to contact a parent if a phone call is not received. If it is absolutely not possible for a parent to call in a student's absence, the student must bring in a note written by the parent to the SSO the day they return to school. Parents needing to call outside of normal school hours may leave a message on the attendance answering machine (989-466-7522). We encourage parents to call the school if they have a concern about their student's attendance. Attendance totals will be communicated to parents via PowerSchool, progress reports, and report cards.

Students who are signed out, must leave campus. Students may not be signed out to go to other classes, the IMC, etc. Students returning the same day must sign back in at the SSO upon arrival. Students arriving late, must also sign in at the SSO.

Students must be in class for at least fifty (50) minutes to be considered present and not absent.

Operating Procedures

The official attendance record of each student will be kept in the individual teacher records. Attendance reports from each teacher for each class will be submitted to the Student Services Office. Attendance information for each trimester will continue to be communicated on the regular report card.

Special circumstances that require extended student absences must be arranged through the assistant principal's office in advance.

Students of compulsory school age who develop attendance problems will be referred to the Regional Education Service District Attendance Officer and/or the Juvenile Division of Probate

Court for appropriate action.

ATTENDANCE WATCH

Students who are absent for more than twelve (12) days during the school year will be considered “frequently absent” and placed on attendance watch. Once a student reaches twelve (12) days absent, he/she will have an attendance intervention meeting with the school success mentor. After twelve (12) days absent, the student will need to have a written excuse (Doctor’s note, court paper, etc.) for the absence to be excused. If absences continue, the student may be denied the opportunity to participate in non-curricular school activities and events. A notation may be made on their transcript concerning frequent absences. This may be provided to postsecondary institutions and/or employers.

TARDINESS

Students have ten (10) minutes of passing time between classes. Any tardy that exceeds fifteen (15) minutes will be considered an absence. Our objective is to have students graduate with not only the academic skills they will require, but with the work ethic and responsibility they will need to be successful. Being able to attend school and work every day in a timely fashion is a very important skill. Teachers will notify the SSO when a student’s tardiness becomes excessive. The disciplinary steps listed below will be implemented at that time.

1 st through 3 rd tardy	Teacher consequences
4 th tardy	Office referral and/or detention
5 th tardy	Saturday, after-school detention, and/or in-school suspension
6 th tardy	Saturday, after-school detention, and/or in-school suspension
7 th tardy & over	Continued detention or out-of-school suspension

CODE OF CONDUCT

A major component of the educational program at Alma High School is to prepare students to become responsible workers and citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards. Each student will be expected to:

- conform to reasonable standards of socially acceptable behavior.
- respect the person and property of others.
- preserve the degree of order necessary to the educational program in which they are engaged.
- respect the rights of others
- obey constituted authority and respond to those who hold that authority.

BEHAVIOR

Disruptive behavior either in or out of the classroom calls for a specific procedure by the agreement between the staff and the board of education, and therefore becomes a part of administrative policy. This applies to behavior in the building, on campus, and at any school function. It also applies to the school property and the property of fellow students. Mutual respect should be demonstrated in the language, actions, and behavior between students and teachers, non-teaching personnel, and fellow students. Students failing to cooperate in an acceptable manner are subject to disciplinary action.

DISCIPLINE

The discipline program at Alma High School is the Student Responsibility Center, SRC, and is a board adopted policy. The basic premise of SRC is that teachers can teach and students can learn in a safe, non-disruptive environment. Our staff is committed to helping students learn respect and responsibility. We believe that discipline is a time to teach and learn. Accordingly, we

begin by working with our students to establish clear and reasonable rules for classroom behavior. Our goal is to create a safe, non-disruptive environment where all students can achieve their highest potential.

GENERAL MISCONDUCT OFFENSES

General misconduct offenses include, but are not limited to:

- Refusing to identify self to school personnel, insubordination, refusal to follow reasonable instruction of school personnel, or suggesting that others too defy reasonable instructions or direction
- Obscene or vulgar language, obscene gestures, or moral affront towards a student
- Misuse of books, materials and equipment
- Stealing (under \$100)
- Unsafe or disorderly behavior which includes but is not limited to running in the halls, throwing objects, undue noise in the halls, possession of lighters or matches, etc
- Possession or Use of dangerous, damaging, or potentially harassing objects: Squirt guns, liquid filled balloons, water bottles, bean shooters, rubber bands, lasers/laser pens, hanging chains, dog chains, etc.
- Disruptive and disrespectful behavior
- Cheating and/or lying
- Skipping classes and unexcused absences
- Failure to dress for gym
- Pushing, shoving, and other minor forms of aggressive behavior
- Minor vandalism (under \$100)
- Chronic unproductive behavior
- Public displays of affection

GENERAL MISCONDUCT CONSEQUENCES

First Violation:	SRC questioning or referral to SRC; plan written
Second Violation:	Referral to SRC; parent notification
Third Violation:	Referral to SRC; parent notification; restorative practices as deemed necessary
Fourth Violation:	Student sent home and intervention meeting required to attend school
Fifth Violation:	One (1) day suspension (In- or out-of school); parent intervention meeting may be requested by parent, principal, or teacher
Sixth Violation:	Three (3) day suspension (In- or out-of school); parent intervention meeting may be requested by parent, principal, or teacher
Seventh Violation:	Five (5) day suspension (In- or out-of school); parent intervention meeting may be requested by parent, principal, or teacher
Eighth Violation:	Up to a ten (10) day suspension; parent intervention meeting may be requested by parent, principal, or teacher
Ninth Violation:	Up to a ten (10) day suspension and possible recommendation for expulsion

For continued violations of general misconduct, refer to administrative policies on incorrigibility/persistent disobedience in violation of school rules and regulations. Consequences are cumulative.

A recommendation for expulsion is made at the discretion of the principal based on the number of violations that are dangerous or highly disruptive in nature.

GROSS MISCONDUCT OFFENSES

Gross misconduct offenses include, but are not limited to:

- Possession of a weapon (Including a knife of any size).
- Arson
- Assault and/or battery
- Fighting on school property or at a school sponsored function (A student may also be held responsible for statements and/or actions, which directly provoked aggressive actions, by another student.)
- Threatening, taunting or provoking others; refusing to obey a clear and reasonable order of a teacher or other school staff
- Harassment, bullying, teasing of any nature including racism, sexual harassment, and cyber bullying
- Bomb threats, false fire alarms, abuse of fire extinguishers, and false police reports
- Breaking and entering: unauthorized entry into school property, including but not limited to school buildings and school vehicles
- Explosives: fireworks, smoking devices, incendiary devices, as well as caustic or noxious substances
- Extortion, blackmail, or coercion; obtaining money or property by violence or force
- Computer tampering, unauthorized access, or modifications and/or destruction of private files
- Forgery; falsifying excuses or other school related documents
- Illicit drugs and substances: manufacturing, distributing, selling, possessing, using, or being under the influence of the following substances:
 - alcohol or any alcoholic beverage, including non-alcoholic malt beverages
 - tobacco products of any kind, including e-cigarettes
 - substances purported to be illegal, abusive, or performance enhancing (ie. “look-a-like” drugs)
 - other mood altering chemicals which can hinder the ability to learn or participate and which could cause damage to the your health
- Interference or intimidation of school staff, which includes force or verbal threats
- Malicious mischief; property damage
- Obscene, vulgar, or profane language towards staff
- Theft, including aiding and abetting (over \$100)
- Vandalism (over \$100)
- Harassment, racist or ethnically slanderous remarks, or moral affronts

GROSS MISCONDUCT CONSEQUENCES

The principal or his/her designee will investigate the offense and allow the student(s) to respond. The parents of those involved will be notified, along with the superintendent and the police, when appropriate. Restorative practices will be implemented as deemed necessary.

One or more of the following may apply as determined by the principal or his/her designee:

- Suspension: either in- or out-of-school up to ten days; required parent intervention meeting
- Suspension of more than ten (10) days
- Recommendation for expulsion
- Restitution of property, if applicable
- Conference with parents or guardians before readmitting students

WEAPONS, ARSON, AND CRIMINAL SEXUAL CONDUCT

In compliance with State and Federal law, the superintendent, on behalf of the board, shall expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone in violation of State law or commits either arson or criminal sexual conduct in a district building or on district

property, including school buses and other school transportation.

For purposes of this policy, a dangerous weapon is defined as "a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles" or other devices designed to or likely to inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices. The term "firearm" is defined as any weapon (including a starter gun) which will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of the explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or silencer; or any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm.

The superintendent need not expel for possession of a dangerous weapon if the student can establish in a clear and convincing manner that:

- the object or instrument was not possessed for use as a weapon, or for direct or indirect delivery to another person for use as a weapon
- the weapon was not knowingly possessed
- the student did not know or have reason to know that the object or instrument possessed constituted a dangerous weapon
- the weapon was possessed at the suggestion, request, or direction of, or with the express permission of a district administrator or the police

There is a rebuttable presumption that expulsion for possessing the weapon is not justified if the board determines in writing that the student has established that he/she fits under one of the exceptions above by clear and convincing evidence, and that the student has no previous history of suspension or expulsion.

The above exceptions will not apply to student misconduct involving sexual conduct or arson.

PHYSICAL AND VERBAL ASSAULT

The superintendent shall permanently expel a student in grade six or above if that he/she commits physical assault at school against a district employee, volunteer, or contractor.

The superintendent shall suspend or expel a student in grade six or above for up to 180 school days if he/she commits physical assault at school against another student. Physical assault is defined as "intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence."

The superintendent shall suspend or expel a student in grade six or above and may discipline, suspend, or expel a student in grade five and below for a period of time as determined at the board's discretion if the student commits verbal assault at school against a district employee, volunteer, or contractor, or makes a bomb threat or similar threat directed at school building, property, or at a school-related activity. Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat.

"At school" means in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises.

Factors for Consideration Before Suspending or Expelling a Student

Prior to suspending or expelling a student for any of the above statutorily mandated reasons, except as noted below, the superintendent shall consider the following factors:

- the student's age
- the student's disciplinary history

- any student disabilities
- the seriousness of the violation or behavior
- whether the violation or behavior threatened the safety of any student or staff member
- whether restorative practices will be used to address the violation or behavior
- whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation or behavior

The superintendent will exercise discretion over whether or not to suspend or expel a student for the statutorily mandated reasons. In exercising that discretion for a suspension of more than ten (10) days or expulsion, there is a rebuttable presumption that a suspension or expulsion is not justified unless the superintendent can demonstrate that it considered each of the factors listed above. For a suspension of ten (10) days or fewer, there is no rebuttable presumption, but the superintendent will still consider the factors.

A student may not be expelled or excluded from the regular school program based on pregnancy. If a student possesses a firearm in a weapon free school zone, the student will be permanently expelled without considering the above factors, unless the student can establish mitigating factors by clear and convincing evidence.

In recognition of the negative impact on a student's education, the board encourages the district's administrators to view suspensions, particularly those over ten (10) days, and permanent expulsions as discipline of last resort, except where these disciplines are required by law. Alternatives to avoid or to improve undesirable behaviors should be explored when possible prior to implementing or requesting a suspension or expulsion.

Restorative Practices

If the district determines that it will utilize restorative practices in addition to or as an alternative to suspension or expulsion of a student, it will engage in restorative practices which emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and school community caused by the student's misconduct.

Restorative practices may include victim and offender conferences that:

- are initiated by the victim
- are approved by the victim's parent or legal guardian or, if the victim is at least fifteen (15), by the victim
- are attended voluntarily by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender, members of the school community, and supporters of the victim and the offender (the restorative practices team)
- would provide an opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm, such as requiring the student to apologize, participate in community service, restore emotional or material losses, attend counseling, pay restitution, or any combination of these

The selected consequences and time limits for their completion will be incorporated into an agreement to be signed by all participants.

HARASSMENT

Harassment of students is prohibited and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including staff, board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers. It is the policy of the district to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Harassment is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well-being. This would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status, or disability.

Any student who believes he/she has been or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to a teacher, counselor, the principal or assistant principal, or superintendent. Complaints will be investigated in accordance with AG 5517.

Every student should, and every staff member must report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

If the investigation finds harassment occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, discharge for staff, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for board members.

Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment or participating in a harassment investigation is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports made to get someone in trouble are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, he/she should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

Harassment

- submission to such unwelcomed conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the school district
- submission to, or rejection of, the unwelcomed conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel, or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions, or privileges of the school district
- the unwelcome conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the students' education opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments

Sexual Harassment

- verbal harassment or abuse
- pressure for sexual activity
- repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications
- unwelcome touching
- sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.
- suggesting or demeaning sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, safety, or job, or performance of public duties

BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

It is the policy of Alma Public Schools to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy protects all students from bullying and aggressive behavior

regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, or psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety, or personal degradation.

Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

This policy applies to all “at school” activities in the Alma Public School District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school’s control or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

Notification

Notice of this policy will be annually circulated to and posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the Alma Public School District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent handbooks. State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedure.

Parents or legal guardians of the alleged victim(s), as well as of the alleged aggressor(s), shall be promptly notified of any complaint or investigation along with the results of the investigation to the extent consistent with student confidentiality requirements. A record of the time and form of notice or attempts at notice shall be kept in the investigation file.

To the extent appropriate and/or legally permitted, confidentiality will be maintained during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations. Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

Implementation

The superintendent is responsible to implement this policy and may develop further guidelines, not inconsistent with this policy. This policy is not intended to and should not be interpreted to interfere with legitimate free speech rights of any individual. However, Alma Public School reserves the right and responsibility to maintain a safe environment for students, conducive to learning and other legitimate objectives of the school program.

Procedure

Any student who believes he/she has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing, or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the principal or assistant principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator. Complaints against the principal should be filed with the superintendent. Complaints against the superintendent should be filed with the board president.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those

identified above. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The principal, or other designee, shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying or other aggressive behavior that may violate this policy. The investigation must be completed as promptly as the circumstances permit and should be completed within three (3) days after a report or complaint is made.

If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement or other appropriate officials.

The individual responsible for conducting the investigation shall document all reported incidents and report all verified incidents of bullying, aggressive, or other prohibited behavior, as well as any remedial action taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals to the superintendent. The superintendent shall submit a compiled report to the board on an annual basis.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the board of education, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the health and safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

Students are provided lockers, desks, and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches. If student lockers require student-provided locks, each student must provide the lock's combination or key to the principal.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the right not to return items which have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

All computers located in classrooms, labs, and offices of the district are the district's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The district retains the right to access and review all electronics, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the district's computer system and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

Review of such information may be done by the district with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee confidentiality, and the district retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student's refusal to permit such access may be ground for disciplinary action.

DRESS CODE AND APPEARANCE

Students are expected to wear clothing in a neat, clean, and well-fitting manner while on school

property and/or in attendance at school sponsored activities. Students are to use discretion in their dress and are not permitted to wear apparel that causes a substantial disruption in the school environment. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Dress, including accessories, may not advertise, promote, or depict alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, violent behavior, or other inappropriate images.
- Dress, including accessories, may not display lewd, vulgar, obscene, or offensive language or symbols, including gang symbols.
- Hairstyles, dress, and accessories that pose a safety hazard are not permitted in the shop, laboratories, or during physical education.
- Clothing with holes, rips, tears, and clothing that is otherwise poorly fitting, showing skin, and/or undergarments may not be worn.
- The length of shorts or skirts must be appropriate for the school environment.
- Appropriate footwear must be worn at all times.
- If there is any doubt about dress and appearance, the principal will make the final decision.
- Student whose dress causes a substantial disruption of the orderly process of school functions or endangers the health or safety of the student, other students, staff or others may be subject to discipline.

If school policy makes it mandatory that all students wear a face mask while inside the building. This mask must follow the dress code for appropriateness. Any student that has a medical condition that makes wearing a mask safe for them must have documentation from a doctor. There is a form in the office that will need to be completed.

RIGHTS OF EXPRESSION

Alma Public Schools recognizes the right of students to express themselves. With the right of expression comes the responsibility to do it appropriately. Students may distribute or display, at appropriate times, unsponsored, noncommercial written material and petitions; buttons, badges, or other insignia; clothing, insignia, and banners; and audio and video materials. All items must meet the following school guidelines:

- A material cannot be displayed if it:
 - is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent and pervasive, or vulgar
 - advertises any product or service not permitted to minor by law
 - intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event
 - presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or manner of distribution or display, it causes or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, or the commission of an unlawful act
- Materials may not be displayed or distributed during class periods or during passing times. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch periods and after school in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building.

Students who are unsure whether or not materials they wish to display meet school guidelines may present them to the administration twenty-four (24) hours prior to display.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Using physical force to discipline students is not permitted. However, State law does permit physical force to take dangerous weapons away from students or to prevent students from harming other people. Although this is law and the right of school officials, it should be understood that physical force would be considered only when all else has failed. Exercising sound reasoning and good judgment by students and staff eliminates the need for such action.

DUE PROCESS

Before a student may be suspended or expelled from school, there are specific procedures that must be followed.

SUSPENSION

When a student is being considered for a suspension of ten (10) days or less, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the charges. The student will then be given an opportunity to explain his/her side and the administrator will then provide the student the evidence supporting the charges. After that informal hearing, the principal will make a decision whether or not to suspend the student. If a student is suspended, he/she and his/her parents will be notified, in writing within one (1) day, of the reason for and the length of the suspension.

The suspension may be appealed, within two (2) school days after receipt of the suspension notice, to the principal or another administrator. The request for an appeal must be in writing. During the appeal process, the student shall not be allowed to remain in school. Suspension from co-curricular and extra-curricular activities may not be appealed. The appeal shall be conducted in a private meeting and the student may be represented. Sworn, recorded testimony shall be given. If the appeal is heard by the board of education, the hearing is governed by the Open Meetings Act. Under the Open Meetings Act, the hearing must be public unless the parents request that the meeting be conducted in a closed session.

When a student is suspended, he/she may make-up work missed while on suspension. Any learning that cannot be made up such as labs, field trips, skill-practices, or any learning that the student chooses not to make-up may be reflected in the grades earned.

A student being considered for suspension of more than ten (10) days will be given due process as described in the expulsion section below.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION

When a student is being considered for long-term suspension (more than ten (10) days) or expulsion, the student will receive a formal letter of notification addressed to the parents which will contain:

- the charge and related evidence
- the time and place of the board meeting
- the length of the recommended suspension or a recommendation for expulsion
- a brief description of the hearing procedure
- a statement that the student may bring parents, guardians, and counsel
- a statement that the student and/or parent may bring a translator or request a transfer for hearing impaired student or parents
- a statement that the student may give testimony, present evidence, and provide a defense
- a statement that the student may request attendance of school staff who were party to the action or accused the student of the infraction
- the ability of the student and/or parent to request, potentially at their own cost, a transcript of the hearing, if board/hearing officer approved

Students being considered for long-term suspension or expulsion may or may not be immediately

removed from school. A formal hearing is scheduled with the superintendent during which the student may be represented by his/her parents, legal counsel, and/or by a person of his/her choice.

Within 10 (ten) days after notification of long-term suspension or expulsion, the long-term suspension or expulsion may be appealed, in writing, to the superintendent. The appeal will also be formal in nature with sworn testimony before official(s) designated by the board. The appeal will be heard in an open session unless the student or the student's parent or guardian requests a closed session. Again, the right to representation is available. All opportunity to earn grades or credit ends when a student is expelled.

Alma Public Schools makes a sincere effort to have disciplinary action take place that will allow the student to remain in school. If a disciplinary action does not result in removal from school, it is not appealable. Should a student or parent have questions regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the assistant principal.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

SECTION V - TRANSPORTATION

BUS TRANSPORTATION

The school provides transportation for all students who live in the designated areas outside of the city limits. The transportation schedule and routes are available by contacting the Transportation Department at 989-463-3116.

BUS CONDUCT

Students who are riding transportation provided by the school are required to follow all basic safety rules. All transportation policies can be found in the Transportation Handbook.

VIDEOTAPING ON BUSES

The board has installed video cameras on school buses to monitor student behavior. Actual videotaping of the students on any particular bus will be done on a random-selection basis. If a student misbehaves on a bus and his/her actions are recorded on a videotape, the tape will be submitted to the principal and may be used as evidence of the misbehavior. Since these tapes are considered part of a student's record, they can be viewed only in accordance with Federal Law.

SECTION VI – ELASTICITY CLAUSE

The administration reserves the right to amend any provision in this handbook, which he/she deems to be in the best interest of the educational process. The administration retains the right to issue penalties for acts of discipline not specifically stated herein and to alter penalties, as he/she considers necessary.